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The Beginning of the Doctrine of the Transcendentals in Philip the Chancellor (ca. 1230)

One of the most interesting, new developments in medieval philosophy was the constitution of the doctrine of the transcendentals in the thirteenth century. The doctrine is concerned with those fundamental philosophical concepts, such as «being,» «one,» and «good,» which express the more common features of reality. It played a prominent role in Thomas Aquinas, who in *De veritate* q. 1, a. 1 presented an extensive account of these concepts, in Duns Scotus and in Master Eckhart's *Opus tripartitum* [1]. In this contribution we will investigate the beginning of the doctrine of the transcendentals in Philip the Chancellor, so called because he was the *Cancellarius* of the University of Paris from 1218 until his death in 1236.

The first scholar who pointed out the seminal significance of Philip the Chancellor for the theory of the transcendentals was Henri Pouillon. In 1939 he published an article that has become classic since then, «The First Treatise on Transcendental Properties.» [2] The

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[1] Cf. Jan A. AERTSEN, «The Medieval Doctrine of the Transcendentals: The Current State of Research», in: *Bulletin de la philosophie médiévale* 33 (1991), pp. 130-147.

[2] «Le premier Traité des Propriétés transcendantales, La 'Summa de bono' du Chancelier Philippe», in: *Revue néoscolastique de philosophie* 42 (1939), pp. 40--77.

title «First Treatise» is slightly misleading, for Philip never wrote a separate treatise on this subject. What Pouillon establishes in his article is that the introductory eleven questions of the *Summa de bono*, written about 1225-28, contain the first formulation of the doctrine of the transcendentals. [3]

Pouillon's conclusions have been corroborated by a comparative inquiry of Philip's questions and a small group of questions in the *Summa aurea* of William of Auxerre (ca. 1220). [4] In preparation for a discussion of the virtues, William examines the nature of goodness (III, tract. X, c. 4). [5] He raises five questions, the first three of which are: «What is goodness?»; «What is the difference between being (*esse*) and being good (*esse bonum*)?»; «What is the difference between the good and the true?». But in William's account nothing is noticeable of Philip's central concerns about the relations between being, good and true. Philip's *Summa* marks a watershed in the development of the doctrine of the transcendentals.

Even after Pouillon's article there are reasons for taking a fresh look at the *Summa de bono*. One reason is that in 1985 the critical edition of this work appeared, which corrects Pouillon's account on some points. [6] The main reason, however, is that in Pouillon's exposition Philip's ordering of the text does not come out well. Philip prefaces the introductory questions with a prologue, in which he states his intention, the structure of these questions and the division of the *Summa*. An analysis of this prologue allows us a better insight into the motives behind the genesis of the doctrine of the transcendentals.

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[3] For the text of the introductory questions see *Philippi Cancellarii Parisiensis Summa de bono*, vol. II, ed. N. WICKI, Bern 1985, pp. 3-36. For the dating of the *Summa* see N. WICKI, «Données de la tradition manuscrite et problèmes d'histoire littéraire», in: *ibid.* vol. I, p. 66*.

[4] S. MACDONALD, «Goodness as Transcendental: The Early Thirteenth-Century Recovery of an Aristotelian Idea», in: *Topoi* 11 (1992), pp. 173-186. See also his Ph.D. dissertation *The Metaphysics of Goodness in Medieval Philosophy before Aquinas*, Cornell University 1986, pp. 205-245. Appendix 7 (pp. 615-629) contains a translation of substantial parts of Philip's questions.

[5] *Summa aurea* III, ed. Jean RIBAILLER, *et al.*, vol. I, Rome 1980-7, pp. 143-170.

[6] So POUILLON (p. 41, n. 5) counts twelve introductory questions, the critical edition eleven.

1. The Prologue

In the Prologue Philip explains his intention by meditating on a text in Scripture, Job 28:1, of which the Latin version reads: *Habet argentum venarum suarum principia, et auro locus est in quo conflatur* (literally: «Silver has beginnings of its veins, and gold has a place where it is sifted»). «Gold» is, in his interpretation, «the wisdom of morals,» while «silver» is «the understanding of questions» (*intelligentia quaestionum*). «Gold» relates to the perfection of practical reason, «silver» to the perfection of theoretical reason. What matters to Philip in this text is the phrase *principia*, for it is this notion that he takes up: silver has starting points or principles, from which our activity of digging up silver begins. [7] He applies the image of a silver mine to theoretical thought:

> «As silver is dug up from hidden veins as from its principles, so the understanding of questions is extracted from the commonness of principles (ex communitate principiorum). When these principles are not known, the rest falls into darkness. Therefore the faith of those who ignore the nature of the principles has suffered shipwreck, as is the case with the Manicheans.» [8]

The beginning of Philip's prologue is quite suggestive. By the comparison with mining he makes clear that his intention is to go «into the ground» of thought. Our understanding of questions must be traced back to the underlying common principles. Apparently he sees the good (*bonum*) as such a fundamental principle, for immediately after the passage cited Philip says in the Prologue that he will mainly deal with the good, an intention that is revealed in the title of his *Summa*. This work is the first medieval *Summa*, of which the notion of the good is the organizing principle.

The focus on the good must be understood in connection with the explicit mention of the Manicheans in the Prologue. Their faith «has suffered shipwreck» (a refence to 1 Timothy 1:19), for they

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[7] *Summa de bono*, prol. (ed. WICKI, 4): «Hoc argentum habet venarum suarum principia, ex quibus tamquam minerale corpus educitur, a quibus incipiemus.»

[8] *Ibid.*, prol. (ed. WICKI, 4).

«ignore the nature of the principles.» This ignorance appears, so Philip seems to suggest, from their denial of the commonness of the good. That the Manichean heresy is constantly present in the background of his discussion, is also evident from the continuation of Philip's exposition. In q. 6, dealing with the opposition between good and evil, he again brings up the Manicheans. They taught the existence of a supreme evil, for in their conception reality is constituted by two principles, the principle of light and the principle of darkness. Their dualistic view shows Philip the necessity of going into the ground of thought.

The Manichean thesis acquired again a topical interest in the high Middle Ages by the doctrine of the Kathars. This movement spread throughout Western Europe from the middle of the twelfth century on, especially in southern France. It advanced two creative principles, a good one that is the cause of the spiritual world, and an evil one that is the cause of the visible and material world. [9] The challenge of the Cathari could be the reason that Philip the Chancellor's doctrine of the common notions is primarily developed in view of the transcendentality of the good. His *Summa de bono* might be meant as a response to the new variant of Manichaeism. [10]

The good is not the only common principle, for Philip goes on to say: «Most common (*communissima*) are these: being, one, true and good.» [11] This is the first indication in the *Summa* of the doctrine of the transcendentals, although he does not use the term *transcendentia* in his work. What this transcendental perspective means is made clear in q. 2, where Philip opposes his approach to that of the natural philosopher who considers form in matter: «We, however, speak now *communiter*, so that we comprehend divine being that is without matter, rational being, natural being and moral

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[9] See R. NELLI, *La philosophie du Catharisme. Le dualisme radical au XIIIe siècle*, Paris 1975; J. JOLIVET, «Logique cathare: la scission de l'universel», in: E. P. Bos (ed.), *Medieval Semantics and Metaphysics* (Studies dedicated to L. M. DE RIJK), Nijmegen 1985, pp. 143-160.

[10] Cf. H. POUILLON, «Le premier Traité», pp. 74-5.

[11] *Summa de bono*, prol. (ed. WICKI, 4): «Communissima autem hec sunt: ens, unum, verum, bonum.»

being.» [12] The transcendental consideration is comprehensive: it encompasses all domains of reality.

Another term Philip employs for the *communissima* is «the firsts» *(prima)*. This term expresses their cognitive priority: «being,» «one,» «true,» and «good» are called the first concepts *(primae intentiones)*, because there is not something prior into which they can be resolved *(fiat resolutio)*. [13] As is often the case, Philip does not elaborate this statement, but apparently he sees a connection between the firstness and the commonness of these concepts: they are first because they are most common, and most common because they are the first. The term *intentio* became a standard phrase in de thirteenth-century discussion of the transcendentals. Umberto Eco interprets the expression *secundum intentionem* as «with respect to the intentionality of the percipient,» [14] but this interpretation is incorrect. The term *intentio* has no subjectivistic connotation at all in this context. It shows the influence of Arab philosophy, for in the *Avicenna latinus intentio* is the translation of the Arabic word *ma'na* and has the same meaning as *ratio*, the translation of the Greek *logos*. [15]

After the introduction of the *communissima* Philip establishes a distinction as to their predication. «Being» is sometimes said *communiter* of all things, and is sometimes «appropriated» *(appropriatur)*[16.] The term «appropriation» is usual in the medieval theology of the Trinity. It means that some divine properties, although they are common to the Trinity, are yet attributed to one of the divine Persons, since they have a greater resemblance to what is proper to one Person than to what is proper to another. We do not find this specific, trinitarian meaning in Philip. [17] For him it means that the *communissima*

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[12] *Ibid.*, q. 2 ad 3 (ed. WICKI, 12).

[13] *Ibid.*, q. 9 (ed. WICKI, 30): «... ens et unum et verum et bonum sunt prima (...). Prime intentiones simplices dicuntur, quia non est ante ipsas in que fiat resolutio. Ante prima non est quod in eorum veniat diffinitionem.»

[14] U. ECO, *Art and Beauty in the Middle Ages*, Yale 1988, p. 24.

[15] See P. ENGELHARDT, «Intentio», in: *Hist. Wörterbuch der Philosophie* IV, Darmstadt 1976, pp. 466-474. Cf. A.-M. GOICHON, *Lexique de la langue philosophique d'Ibn Sina (Avicenne)*, Paris 1938, pp. 253-55.

[16] *Summa de bono*, prol. (ed. WICKI, 4).

[17] Cf. q. 8 (ed. WICKI, 27), where the good is «appropriated to the good of nature.»

are sometimes treated as proper to God. The distinction between «common» and «proper» is explained through texts from Scripture. «Being» is said *communiter* in Romans 4:17 («He calls non-being into being»), it is appropriated in the famous text in Exodus 3:14 («I am who am»). «Good» is said *communiter* in Genesis 1:31 («And God saw everything that he had made, and behold, it was very good»), it is appropriated to God in Luke 18:19 («Why do you call me good?»).

Philip concludes the Prologue by dividing the eleven introductory questions of the *Summa* into four groups:

A. «First, then, we must inquire about the relation of good to being one and true.» The relations between the *communissima* are dealt with in qq. 1-3.

B. «After that, whether there is some good to which no bad is opposed, and whether this is the highest good.» The proof that there is a *summum bonum* is given in q. 4.

C. The third group of questions is concerned with the relation between the common good and the good proper to God. «Then, whether that [highest] good adds some difference to good, or not, but is just the good itself; and we must inquire about the other things which are from the highest good insofar as it is good» (qq. 5-7).

D. Finally, «the division of created good» will be examined (qq. 10 and 11). In these questions Philip lays the foundation of the division of the *Summa* into three main parts: «The good of nature» (47 questions), «the generic good» (5 questions) that concerns action and «the good of grace» (96 questions).

Before section D Philip inserts two other questions: «Are being and being good the same for every created thing?» (q. 8) and «On the predication 'Goodness is good'» (q. 9). [18] These questions are derived from Boethius's writing *De hebdomadibus*. This work played an important role in the evolution of medieval thought. It became a textbook in the twelfth century, that has been called the *Aetas Boetiana*, as when it was commented upon by Gilbert de la Porrée

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[18] See the intro of q. 8 (ed. WICKI, 27): «Sed ante quam loquamur de divisione boni tangamus quasdam questiones, que possunt ad bonum creatum generaliter referri vel appropriari bono naturae.»

and Clarembald of Arras. [19] *De hebdomadibus* is a response to a question propounded to Boethius by a friend: «How can substances be good in virtue of the fact that they are when they are not substantially good?» Boethius's reflection on the relation between being and good fits quite well in the themes of Philip's introductory questions. Its incorporation into the *Summa* shows a moment of continuity between the formation of the doctrine of the transcendentals and earlier medieval thought.

Philip's division of the introductory questions reflects the two main issues of the Prologue. On the one hand, being, one, true and good are the *communissima*, but the focus will be on the good; on the other hand, they are not only «commonly» predicated, but also appropriated to God. We will look into his elaboration of the two issues.

2. The systematization of the 'communissima'

As is announced in the Prologue, the first group of questions is concerned with «the relation of good to being, one, and true.» Q. 1 investigates «the relation between good and being;» q. 2 «the relation between good and true;» q. 3 «the ordering of true with respect to good.» It is striking that no separate question is devoted to «the one». From our analysis, however, it will appear that *unum* is not ignored, but is just central in Philip's account of the transcendentals.

Noteworthy in the first question is that the transcendentality of the good is not demonstrated, but is presupposed. Philip's main concern is the problem how the good can be defined. He begins the discussion with a number of objections claiming that a definition is impossible. The first of them says:

> «Good and being (*ens*) are interchangeable because whatever is a being is good, and the converse. But being does not have a definitional account (*diffinitivam rationem*); there fore neither does good.» [20]

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[19] Cf. G. SCHRIMPF, *Die Axiomenschrift des Boethius (De hebdomadibus) als philosophisches Lehrbuch des Mittelalters*, Leiden 1966; M.-D. CHENU, *La théologie au douzième siècle*, Paris 1957, ch. VI: *Aetas Boetiana*, pp. 142-158.

[20] *Summa de bono*, q. 1 (ed. WICKI, 5).

The first premise of this argument states but does not really explain the convertibility of good and being: *Bonum et ens convertuntur*. Philip uses here a term that would become the standard phrase for the relation between transcendentals. The term «convertible» comes from the theory of predication and is derived from Aristotle's *Topics*. [21] It signifies the relation between subject and predicate is of such a nature that they are interchangeable. In *Metaphysics* XI, c.3 (1061a 15-17), Aristotle introduces the notion of convertibility with respect to being and one and explains: «That which is one, is also somehow being, and that which is being is somehow one.» Another source was Boethius, who also employs the term *convertitur* for the relation between being and one. [22] Philip the Chancellor applies here the notion of convertibility to «good» and «being» as expression of their real identity.

Nor is the second premise of the objection, being has no definition, explained. It formulates an Aristotelian basic idea. Being cannot be defined, for being is not a genus that can be specified by something different from it. That which differs from being is nothing, but non-being cannot be a difference. When the good is as common as being, good is therefore undefinable as well.

Although a strict definition is impossible, Philip observes that the good nevertheless has «descriptions» *(notificationes)*. The first, derived from Dionysius the Areopagite, is: «The good is what is desired by all things.» The character of the good as an end is also expressed by the formula that is mentioned by Aristotle at the beginning of his *Ethics*: «All things seek the good.» The second description, again taken from Dionysius, is: «The good is multiplicative and diffusive of being.» The third description, «extracted from Aristotle and other philosophers,» is: «The good is what has the indivision of act from potency absolutely or in a certain respect.»

After the enumeration of three descriptions of the good Philip presents a counter argument *(contra)* that considers the possibility of

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[21] *Topica* I,8, 103b 7-17. Cf. PETER OF SPAIN, *Tractatus* VI, 11 (ed. DE RIJK, p. 84).

[22] BOETHIUS, *Contra Eutychen* c. 4 (*The Theological Tractates*, ed. E. K. RAND, Cambridge, Mass. 1973, p. 94): «Esse enim atque unum convertitur et quodcumque unum est est.» Cf. *In Topicorum* I, c. 4 (*Migne* PL 64, 913A).

a definition. The argument is not presented in a clear way, but pre-pares his solution of the problem. It seems that good cannot be defined by something prior to it. If it is defined in terms of so-mething prior to it and a difference, it receives being in its de-finition as the genus together with something added as the di-ference. But what is added will be convertible with being. This is because what is added will be convertible with good, and good is convertible with being. Philip concludes that the difference is not added to being for the purpose of limiting the scope of refe-rence of being (*ad contrahendum suppositum*) — we shall come back to the term «supposit» —, but is added only in a conceptual res-pect (*quantum ad rationem*). He next wonders what kind of de-termination that is. The question he raises here will become a central problem in the medieval doctrine of the transcendentals. When the other *communissima* are convertible with being, in which sense, then, can they add something to being? Philip ar-gues that the good is immediately related to being and that it is therefore not defined by being and a positive reality added to being. The difference added to being must be taken according to the way in which «one» adds something to being. When it is said that «one is undivided being,» «undivided» takes away division from being. [23]

Philip's reply to the question as to the definability of the good is an example of his independence. He claims that the third description of the good in terms of indivision is the primary and principal concept, despite the fact that the other two definitions are taken from such authorities as Pseudo-Dionysius and Aristotle. «The good is what has the indivision of act from potency abso-

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[23] *Summa de bono*, q. 1 (ed. WICKI, 7): «Et ita [bonum] non diffinietur per ens et aliquam positionem superadditam, sicut nec unum cum dicitur unum est ens indivisum; 'indivisum' enim ponit ens et privat ab ente divisionem.» My interpreta-tion of this argument differs from Scott MACDONALD's in his article «Goodness as Transcendental» in: *Topoi* 11 (1992), p. 178. He takes Philip's conclusion that the difference in any definition of good can specify being only conceptually without also carving up the corresponding reality to be an absurd consequence. Note, how-ever, that Philip himself observes in his reply to this counterargument (ed. WICKI, 8) that it is not a real objection.

lutely or in some respect.» ²⁴ He explains the meaning of the two qualifications «absolutely» and «in some respect.» The former applies to the first being, «for potency is identical with act in the divine essence;» the latter holds for other things, for their essences possess potency and so incompletion. Only the first being is «pure act.» The Aristotelian notions of act and potency are used by Philip as a specification of «indivision,» which is the central notion in the definition of the good.

He does not explain, however, why the description in terms of indivision is the primary concept of the good. But in a reply to an objection he gives an argument for his preference:

> «The primary definition of the good is given ... by a difference that consists in a negation; for the *prima* must be determined in this way, as is the case of the one (*unum*).» ²⁵

The definition of «one,» «undivided being,» must be the model for the determinations of the other transcendentals, as Philip had already indicated in his argument *contra*. The attraction of the model is that «one» adds something to «being» without this addition entailing a limitation of the extension of «one». «One» retains its comprehensive, transcendental character, because it only adds something conceptual, a negation. The importance of this model for Philip's interpretation of the relation of the good to being becomes manifest in q. 1, in his reply to the first objection:

> «The fact that good and being are convertible does not prevent one from describing good in terms of being. Even though they are convertible with respect to the extension and scope of their supposits (*suppositorum*), the good goes beyond being conceptually (*ratione*), namely, through the fact that it is undivided from the end or from the act that is called a completion.» ²⁶

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²⁴ *Summa de bono*, q. 1 (ed. Wicki, 7): «Dicimus autem rationem illam rationem primam et principalem: bonum est habens indivisionem actus a potentia simpliciter vel quodammodo.»

²⁵ *Ibid.*, q. 1 (ed. Wicki, 8).

²⁶ *Ibid.*, q. 1 ad 1 (ed. Wicki, 8).

Philip formulates an identity and a difference between good and being, and his view of the twofold relation between the transcendentals would be adopted by thinkers as Alexander of Hales, Albert the Great and Thomas Aquinas. With respect to their supposits, being and good are convertible; but with respect to their concepts the good goes beyond being, for it adds something to being. That is the reason that Philip is so concerned with the definability of the good: its *ratio* must be understood as a conceptual determination of being.

What needs further explanation is Philip's formula of the identity among the transcendentals. What does he mean when he states that they are convertible according to their *supposita*? One is inclined to surmise a connection with the logical-semantic approach in medieval philosophy. One of the original developments in terminist logic is the theory of the properties of terms in which a distinction is made between *significatio* and *suppositio*. Chronologically this connection is conceivable, for the handbook of terminist logic, the *Tractatus* of Peter of Spain, was written in the 1230's. The theory of supposition distinguishes the different semantic functions a term can have according to the propositional context; the term can «stand for» (*supponit*) itself, for the universal form or concept, or for some *suppositum* contained under its concept. Because «supposition» is roughly analogous to «reference» in twentieth-century terminology, some scholars translate the identity of the transcendentals according to their *supposita* into modern philosophical language and interpret this identity as sameness in reference. [27]

Now the theory of supposition was indeed used for the description of the relations between the transcendentals in the fourteenth century. William of Ockham, for instance, states that when the terms 'being' and 'one' have «personal supposition,» that is, when they refer to individuals of which they are truly predicable, they are iden-

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[27] See for the theory of «supposition» two contributions in the *Cambridge History of Later Medieval Philosophy*: L. M. DE RIJK, «The origins of the theory of the properties of terms» (161-173) and P. V. SPADE, «The semantics of terms» (188-196). Cf. for the use of modern terminology in the study of medieval semantics, L. M. DE RIJK, «On Ancient and Medieval Semantics and Metaphysics», in: *Vivarium* 15 (1977), p. 86. E. STUMP and N. KRETZMANN, «Being and Goodness», in: S. MACDONALD,

tical; but when they have «simple supposition,» they signify different concepts, since 'one' connotes something other than 'being.' [28] Thirteenth-century authors, however, do not use the term *suppositio* in the context of the transcendentals, but *suppositum* that has rather an ontological meaning: it signifies the concrete things falling under a common nature. The connection of this signification with supposition as property of a term is however easily to make, for the term signifying the common nature can stand for (*supponit*) each and any of the supposits of that nature.

The same strategy as in q. 1 is followed by Philip in the second question («On the relation between good and true»). Although «true» and «good» are convertible, they still have different definitions. He presents five definitions of truth, that of Augustine in *Soliloquia* II, 5 («that which is»), Hilary of Poitiers in *De trinitate* V, 3 («that which declares or manifests being»), Anselm of Canterbury in his dialogue *De veritate* («rightness perceptible only by the mind»), the formula «adequation of thing and intellect,» and, finally, a definition in terms of «indivision»: «the true is the indivision of being and that which is» (*verum est indivisio esse et quod est*). Which of these definitions, Philip asks, is the most appropriate?

He objects to Hilary's definition, since the phrase «that which declares or manifests being» contains a reference to a knowing subject. The true must be defined «without any relation to an intellect.»[29] The definition, «adequation of thing and intellect», expresses according to Philip a secondary type of truth, namely, the truth of the sign, because the adequation in question must be understood as that of a mental sign and the thing signified. [30] From these objections it is obvious that he is seeking a purely ontological definition of

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Being and Goodness. The Concept of the Good in Metaphysics and Philosophical Theology, Ithaca and London 1991, p. 99, Nt 4.

[28] WILLIAM OF OCKHAM, *Scriptum in I Sent.*, d. 24, q. 1 (*Opera Theol.* IV, 85).

[29] *Summa de bono*, q. 2 (ed. WICKI, 13): «Verum enim dicitur sine respectu ad intellectum.»

[30] *Ibid.*, q. 2 (ed. WICKI, 13): «Illa diffinitio: veritas est adaequatio etc. appropriatur comparationi signi ad signatum, secundum quod signum ostendit rem esse ut est.»

truth. Consequently, the center of Philip's discussion moves to the relation between being and the true.

Augustine's definition «The true is that which is» (*id quod est*) seems to be a suitable candidate. Indeed, Philip is of the opinion that this definition indicates what truth is secundum substantiam [31] Yet he is not satisfied with this definition because it insufficiently expresses that by which «truth», qua concept (ratio), differs from «being.» The statement «every being is true» threatens to become a tautology, if the true does not go beyond being conceptually. Augustine's definition must therefore be «articulated,» and this articulation gives rise to the fifth definition mentioned by Philip: the true is the indivision of being and and that which is.» [32]

Philip regards this definition as the most appropriate and says that «it is taken *a Metaphysicis*. [33] The modern editor of the *Summa de bono* admits that he could not find the definition in Aristotle's *Metaphysics*. He is in good company, for a similar remark was already made in the thirteenth century by Albert the Great. [34] That their search was unsuccessfull is not surprising, for it is plausible that it was Philip himself who framed this definition in view of his systematization of the most common notions. He has borrowed the elements of the definition of truth from two «metaphysicians,» Aristotle and Boethius. [35]

The last part of the definition, the specification of «indivision» as that «of being and that which is,» is based on Boethius's ontology. Philip refers to two axioms in *De hebdomadibus*, which read: «For every simple, to be (*esse*) and that which is are one.» «For every composite, to be and that which is are different». In God, to be and

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[31] *Ibid.*, q. 2 (ed. Wicki, 13).

[32] *Ibid.*, q. 2 (ed. Wicki, 11): «Cum dicitur id quod est, tria secundum rationem designantur: id et esse et articulatio et equivalet illi: verum est ens habens indivisionem esse et eius quod est.»

[33] *Ibid.*, q. 2 (ed. Wicki, 10).

[34] ALBERT THE GREAT, *De bono* I, 1. 8 (*Opera Omnia* vol. 28, 15): «Dicitur quod traditur a metaphysicis sed non perspicue invenitur in libro.»

[35] In my interpretation Philip's phrase *a metaphysicis* does not refer to Aristotle's *Metaphysics*. Later in q. 2 (ed. WICKI, 13) he states that the definition is taken from «philosophers.»

that which is are identical; in him, indivision is in the highest degree (*maxime*), and thus truth in the highest degree. Although in other things to be and that which is are different, their truth consists in the indivision of these components. [36]

The central element both in Philip's definition of the good and in that of the true is the notion of «indivision.» The explanation of his preference must be sought in a discussion of Aristotle's about being and one, which became the basis for the medieval doctrine of the transcendentals. In Book IV of the *Metaphysics* (c. 2, 1003b 22-25) Aristotle analyzes the relation between being and one. They signify «the same nature» in the sense that they follow upon each other, but not in the sense that they are determined «by one concept» (*logos*). What is conceptually expressed by «one» is the «undividedness» of being; it adds a negation to being. Philip's achievement is the extension of the Aristotelian model of the relation between being and one to the other transcendentals, the true and the good.

In q. 3 of the *Summa* Philip examines the order of *verum* and *bonum* on the basis of their definitions in terms of indivision. The true is conceptually prior to the good, for the indivision expressed by «truth» only refers to being (*ens*), whereas the indivision expressed by «good» includes the notion of end and the relation to an end. [37] The most striking feature of Philip's doctrine is his understanding of the *communissima* in terms of *indivision*. «One» is the first determination of being, for it only adds indivision as such to being, [38] «true» and «good» add an indivision of a specific nature. A crucial presupposition in his system is that «being» is the first concept, but

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[36] *Summa de bono* q. 2 (ed. WICKI, 11). Cf. BOETHIUS, *De hebdomadibus*, prop. VII and VIII (ed. H. F. STEWART, 42).

[37] *Ibid.*, q. 3 (ed. WICKI, 17): «Dico quod verum simpliciter prius est intellectu quam bonum. Et hoc patet ex diffinitionibus. Verum enim dicitur habens indivisionem esse et eius quod est. Non nominatur hic quod non sit ex parte entis, scilicet ipsum esse et id quod est. In ratione autem boni preter esse habetur intentio finis et comparatio ad finem cum dicitur: bonum est habens indivisionem actus a potentia sive finis simpliciter vel quodam modo. Et ita patet quod verum naturaliter prius est quam bonum.»

[38] Cf. *ibid.*, q. 7 (ed. WICKI, 27): «Unum non ponit super ens nisi indivisionem.»

Philip does not elaborate this presupposition anywhere. The order of the transcendentals in the *Summa de bono* is:

Ens
|
Unum: indivision
|
Verum: indivision of being and that which is
|
Bonum: indivision of act from potency

3. God and the commonness of the good

Does the transcendentality of the good mean that it is common to the highest good, God, and the other things? In the Prologue Philip had observed that the good both belongs to the most common notions and is «appropriated» to God. How is the relation between what is common (*commune*) and what is proper (*proprium*) to be interpreted? Philip deals with this problem in q. 5 (*De communitate huius intentionis 'bonum'*).

A long objection argues the good does not seem to be a reality common to the highest good and the created good. For when the good is said of the highest good, it is identical with God himself. Just as God is not something common, so the good cannot be either. Moreover, if the good were common, it would imply a composition of that which is *commune* and that which is *proprium* in God. The objector also rejects another version of the community thesis, according to which the good is common to God and the creature in virtue of a similar relation they have to their effects. If the good were common on this account, it would equally participated in by God and the created and the concept of the good would be taken from what is later (*a posteriori*), namely, from the effects.

In his reply Philip expounds that the good is not common in the sense of a genus. The good belongs to God through itself (*per se*) and for the sake of itself (*propter se*), it belongs to the creatures insofar as they are from him and towards him. The commonness of the good is a commonness *secundum prius et posterius*. This is explai-

ned by Philip through the example of «being» that is said in common, but according to an order of priority and posteriority. «Being» is said primarily of the substance, that is being *per se,* and secondarily and indirectly of the accident, that exists in virtue of the substance. The good said of God can therefore still be common, because it is said directly and primarily of him, indirectly and secondarily of the creature. The terms *commune* and *proprium* refer, Philip emphasizes, to «the mode of saying.» [39] The commonness «according to priority and posteriority» that Philip attributes to a transcendental concept is expressed by later thinkers in the thirteenth century through the term «analogy.» It is noteworthy that this notion is absent in Philip here. [40]

Another aspect of the commonness of the good and the relation between the divine good and the created good is discussed in q. 7: «Concerning the flowing of things from the first» (*De fluxu rerum a Primo*). There Philip raises the question «why all things have proceeded from the first in accordance with the nature (*ratio*) of good rather than in accordance with the nature of wise, or powerful?» When the first principle is wise, why, then, are not all things wise that have originated from it? Philip points out that a similar question was already posed by Boethius in *De hebdomadibus*: «All things are good in virtue of the fact that they have being; why are they not just in virtue of the fact that they have being?» In other words, why is it that the good, and not just or wise, belongs to the *communissima*?

In his reply Philip holds that there are three conditions concomitant with being: first, unity; second, truth; and third, goodness. The term «concomitant» is another indication of the influence of Arab philosophy. It is derived from Avicenna and is another expression for

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[39] *Ibid.,* q. 5 (ed. WICKI, 23): «Dico ergo quod bonum quod dicitur de Deo indifferens est illi et tamen commune potest esse, quia directe en secundum prius de ipso, indirecte et posterius de creatura. Et ibi est accipere 'commune' et 'proprium' quantum ad modum dicendi.»

[40] In a later text in the *Summa* (*De bono naturae* IV, q.2.2) Philip expressly says that predication according to priority and posteriority is the same as predication «according to analogy» (*secundum analogiam*).

the convertibility and commonness of these conditions. [41] Philip relates the three conditions of being to the three causal aspects of the first principle: efficient, formal and final. These aspects can be distinguished conceptually, but are one in reality. Every essence has the three conditions concomitant with its being insofar as it is from the first being. «Each being is made (*efficiatur*) to be one by the first being in accordance with the nature of unity, to be true by it insofar as it is the formal exemplary cause, and to be good insofar as it is the final cause.» [42] The transcendentality of one, true, and good is founded on the creative causality of the first principle. Philip's argument suggests that because this causality is threefold, there cannot be more but three general conditions of being.

Philip the Chancellor is an original thinker who deserves more attention in the history of medieval philosophy than he generally receives. His intention of going back into the «ground of thought» by reducing our understanding of questions to the *communissima* results in the formation of the doctrine of the transcendentals. For the first time he brings together four basic notions, «being,» «one,» «true,» and «good», whose mutual relations he investigates. Several elements of his doctrine will determine subsequent discussions of the transcendentals. The first is his solution of the question concerning their identity and difference. The *communissima* are are convertible according to their supposits, but differ according to their concepts. The second is the order of the most common notions, based on the notion of indivision. The third is his analysis of the relation between God and the transcendentals and the foundation of the conditions concomitant with being on the threefold divine causality. But Philip's doctrine bears the clear marks of a first draft. His account is terse

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[41] AVICENNA, *Metaph.* III, c. 3 (ed. VAN RIET I, p. 117).

[42] *Summa de bono*, q. 7 (ed. WICKI, 26-7): «Unde unaqueque essentia habens has tres rationes causarum tres habet conditiones que concomitantur esse eius secundum quod est a primo ente, ut a primo ente secundum rationem unius efficiatur unumquodque ens unum, ab ipso secundum quod est causa formalis exemplaris verum, secundum quod est finalis bonum.» In the continuation of this text Philip enters into the question why the one is atributed to the efficient cause.

and little explicit, and it conveys sometimes the impression of being written in shorthand. In the twenty-five years after his *Summa* the doctrine would be further elaborated in an early work of Albert the Great, *De bono*, in the *Summa theologica* (I, tract. 3), attributed to Alexander of Hales, and in Thomas Aquinas.